



TESTIMONY OF

**REGINALD EADIE, M.D., M.B.A.
PRESIDENT & CEO
TRINITY HEALTH OF NEW ENGLAND**

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 24, 2022

HB 5037 AN ACT ADJUSTING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. Trinity Health Of New England includes Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center and Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital in Hartford, Saint Mary's Hospital in Waterbury, Johnson Memorial Hospital in Stafford Springs and Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts. In addition, our ministry includes physician practices, an ambulatory services networks, home health and post-acute services. We are more than 10,000 health care providers committed to being a healing and transforming presence in the communities we serve.

Thank you for the critical legislation that you passed last session dealing with gun violence intervention and prevention. In addition to providing Medicaid reimbursement for Violence Prevention Professionals, that legislation created an Advisory Committee to study gun violence intervention and prevention. This committee was chaired by Andrew Woods, President of Hartford Communities That Care (HCTC). The committee submitted their report to the legislative committees of cognizance on December 31, 2021. The Advisory Committee cited, as their number one priority, the creation of a permanent Commission on Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention. This Commission would coordinate funding, implement evidence-based community focused programs and develop strategies to reduce street level gun violence in our state.

I am pleased to see that Governor Lamont's budget, HB 5037, does reflect this recommendation with \$5 million to establish a permanent commission on violence intervention and prevention, as well as \$3.6 million in funding for the Department of Public Health to support community-based gun violence programs.

The care givers at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center appreciate the value of these kinds of programs. We have been blessed to partner with HCTC for over 16 years. HCTC responds to the Saint Francis Emergency Department 24 hour/day, 365 days/ year - whenever we have gunshot victims present. They connect with the family and with the victim either in the Emergency Department or when the patient is stabilized after surgery. The members of the HCTC response team also work in the community to reduce the possibility of retribution in the hours and days after the inciting incident. Patients and their families are assisted in navigating the process to obtain funding through Victims of Crime Act and other financial supports, behavioral health support, and to assure that the medical homecare safety net is in place. To date, over 1,800 victims of gun violence and their families have received assistance.

I ask that you support the funding in HB 5037 to establish a permanent commission on gun violence intervention and prevention, as well as the funding to support community-based violence programs.

Additionally, I ask that you include the necessary Medicaid funding to reimburse these violence prevention services as outlined in last year's legislation (PA 21-36). By funding these initiatives, you will ensure that the victims of gun violence and their families receive the programs and services they deserve, and importantly help to reduce the incidents of gun violence in our communities.

Thank you for your consideration of our position. For additional information, contact Dan Keenan at dkeen@trinity-health.org or 860-714-0437.